

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA****COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA***[Hearing Held in Spartanburg, SC]***HEARING #10794****JULY 17, 2006****6:30 P.M.**

**DOCKET NO. 2006-107-WS: UNITED UTILITY COMPANIES, INC. –** *Application for Approval of an Adjustment of Rates and Charges and Modifications to Certain Terms and Conditions for the Provision of Water and Sewer Service.*

**HEARING BEFORE:** CHAIRMAN G. O’Neal HAMILTON, Presiding; VICE CHAIRMAN C. Robert MOSELEY and COMMISSIONERS John E. “Butch” HOWARD, David A. WRIGHT, Elizabeth B. Lib FLEMING, Mignon L. CLYBURN, and Randy MITCHELL.

*Legal Advisor to Commissioners:* F. David Butler, Senior Counsel.

*Commission Technical Advisor:* James B. Spearman, Ph.D.

**STAFF:** Charles L.A. Terreni, Chief Clerk/Administrator; Jocelyn G. Boyd, Deputy Clerk; Phillip Riley, Advisory Staff; and MaryJane Cooper, Court Reporter.

**APPEARANCES:**

John M. S. Hoefer, Esq., representing UNITED UTILITY COMPANIES, INC., **Applicant.**

Nanette E. Edwards, Esq., representing THE OFFICE OF REGULATORY STAFF.

**TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY AND PROCEEDINGS  
VOLUME 1**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

**INDEX**

	<b><u>PAGE</u></b>
<b><u>WELCOME by Chairman Hamilton:</u></b> .....	3
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Joe Metts</u></b> .....	9
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	13
Examination by Chairman Hamilton .....	14
<b><u>TESTIMONY by John M. Davis, Jr.</u></b> .....	15
Examination by Commissioner Mitchell .....	17
Examination by Chairman Hamilton .....	18
Examination by Commissioner Howard .....	19
Further Examination by Commissioner Chairman Hamilton .....	19
Examination by Commissioner Wright .....	20
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Tammy Sell</u></b> .....	20
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	22
Examination by Commissioner Wright .....	24
Examination by Commissioner Fleming .....	25
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefler .....	26
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Tommy Cook</u></b> .....	27
Examination by Commissioner Mitchell .....	28
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	29
Examination by Chairman Hamilton .....	30
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefler .....	30
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Carolyn R. Smith</u></b> .....	31
Examination by Commissioner Wright .....	35
Examination by Commissioner Howard .....	34
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefler .....	34
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Beverly Wade</u></b> .....	35
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	36
Examination by Commissioner Fleming .....	38
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefler .....	39
Examination by Vice Chairman Moseley .....	39
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Paul Houle</u></b> .....	40
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	41
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Ponease Gosnell</u></b> .....	44
Examination by Chairman Hamilton .....	46
Examination by Commissioner Wright .....	47
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	48
Examination by Commissioner Fleming .....	49
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefler .....	49
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Margaret Wilson</u></b> .....	51
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Jimmy Fowler</u></b> .....	53
<b><u>TESTIMONY by Scott Bagwell</u></b> .....	55
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	56

1 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: First, I'd like to welcome  
2 each of you to the Public Service Commission's Hearing.  
3 Hopefully, we'll be able to get the information that you  
4 want to have us leave with tonight. Each and everyone of  
5 you that signed up tonight will have an opportunity to speak,  
6 and we look forward to what you have to say.

7 First, I'd like to introduce our Commissioners, and  
8 I'll start on my right with Commissioner Lib Fleming, Com-  
9 missioner Mignon Clyburn, and Commissioner Randy  
10 Mitchell, and on my left we have Commissioner Butch  
11 Howard, Commissioner David Wright, Vice President-  
12 Bob Moseley. I'm O'Neal Hamilton, Chairman of the  
13 Commission; and Mr. David Butler is our Senior Staff  
14 Attorney who will be explaining to you the rules and  
15 procedures of tonight's hearing. Mr. Butler.

16 F. DAVID BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
17 very much. Again, as Chairman Hamilton stated, I'm  
18 David Butler, Senior Counsel, and on behalf of the  
19 Commission Staff, I also want to welcome you here tonight.

20 In just a moment we'll be the calling names of the  
21 people who have signed up to speak tonight, but I have a  
22 couple of announcements to make first, and also the ground  
23 rules.

24 This is the hearing in Docket No. 2006-107-WS  
25 regarding the Application of United Utility Companies,

1 Inc., for Adjustment of Rates and Charges and  
2 Modification of Certain Terms and Conditions for the  
3 Provision of Water and Sewer Service. I might add, that  
4 this if the first of five such public hearings that the Com-  
5 mission is holding throughout the state. Tomorrow night  
6 the Commission will be in Anderson. The Commission will  
7 also be holding public hearings in Gaffney, Greenville, and  
8 Union as well.

9 I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce several  
10 key people that are with us tonight. First, with the Com-  
11 mission Staff, we have Mr. Charlie Terenni who's the  
12 Chief Clerk/ Administrator, seated to my right. We have  
13 Ms. Jocelyn Boyd, Deputy Clerk, seated to my left; and  
14 we have various other Commission Staff members, who  
15 some of them signed you in on the way in. We also  
16 have Ms. Nanette Edwards from the Office of Regulatory  
17 Staff, who is with us tonight. She is the Deputy General  
18 Counsel; and we have Mr. Willie Morgan who is in the  
19 Water/Wastewater Division. We also have Ms. April Sharpe  
20 who is the head of the Consumer Services Division.

21 Also with us tonight, we have Mr. John Hoefer who  
22 is counsel for United Utility Companies, and Mr. Hoefer is  
23 here with his clients who are various members, repre-  
24 sentatives of United Utility Companies, who are seated to  
25 his left.

1 I wanted to make a few further announcements  
2 and announce the ground rules, if I may. Again, everything  
3 you have to say will be put into the record of this case.  
4 Everything that you say will be taken into the record by  
5 means of our Court Reporter, who is seated to my right.  
6 You will be sworn in prior to giving your statement, and  
7 please, after you're sworn in, state your name and address  
8 so that the Court Reporter will be able to identify you at a  
9 later time. Also, if you will, please speak into the micro-  
10 phone that's up here in front of us so that we can hear  
11 what you say, and everybody can hear you.

12 Now, you may be asked questions by  
13 Commissioners or a company attorney, please remain at  
14 the podium for a moment after giving your statement so  
15 that the Commissioners or the company attorney or Office of  
16 Regulatory Staff may ask you any questions that they have.

17 Another thing that I needed to announce is that if  
18 you filed in Columbia as a formal Intervenor or party of  
19 record to this case or as a witness for an Intervenor, you  
20 cannot speak tonight, you must save your testimony for  
21 the hearing in Columbia. Also, if you speak as a public  
22 witness tonight, you will not be permitted to speak at any  
23 of the other public hearings that we're going to have.

24 Further, if another person happens to come up and says  
25 what you want to say, and you say, "*well, they just said*

1 *what I want to say, I really don't want to speak anymore",*  
2 then it's okay for you to just adopt their statement and  
3 decline to speak when it comes your turn. You can just so  
4 indicated to us when your name is called.

5 Finally, I might just say that tonight the focus is on  
6 you as consumers of this utility. This is a time for you to  
7 come up and make your statements with regard to the  
8 proposed rate adjustment that United Utility is proposing.  
9 I might say, this hearing is not a time to ask the Com-  
10 missioners questions, but again, it's a time for you to be  
11 heard on the subject of the proposed rate increase. Also,  
12 your time to address the Commissioners is during this  
13 hearing itself. In other words, whether than approaching  
14 the Commissioners after the hearing with statements,  
15 please place your comments on the record at the podium  
16 so that they can be recorded for all parties.

17 After the hearing, you may speak to representatives  
18 of the Office of Regulatory Staff, who again, are here; the  
19 company representatives – with any questions that you  
20 may have. So, if you have questions, please hold them for  
21 those parties after the hearing.

22 And, Mr. Chairman, without further adieu, if it's  
23 agreeable with you , I can begin calling the names of the  
24 people who have signed up who wish to testify.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, sir.

1 MR. BUTLER: All right. First, I would like to call –

2 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Excuse me, sir.

3 JOHN M. S. HOEFER.: Mr. Chairman, before the  
4 first witness is sworn, I have an objection we want to cite  
5 for the record.

6 The applicant would like to state its objection to  
7 testimony consisting of unsubstantiated complaints  
8 regarding customer service, quality of service, or customer  
9 relations issues. The basis for this objection is the receipt  
10 and reliance on such testimony would deny the applicant  
11 due process of law, permit complaint procedures estab-  
12 lished under law and Commission Regulations for the  
13 determination of such matters to be circumvented, and is  
14 an inappropriate basis for the determination of just and  
15 reasonable rates.

16 In support of this objection, applicant would cite  
17 *Patton v. PSC*, 312 SE<sup>d</sup>, 257, and Order of the Court of  
18 Common Pleas in the *Tega Cay Water Service v. PSC*, Civil  
19 Action No. 97-CP-40-0923, and Commission Order  
20 No. 1999-191, Docket No. 96-137-WS, which was a  
21 March 16, 1999, Order.

22 The applicant would request that this objection be  
23 deemed a continuing objection such that there would not  
24 be a need for repeated objections each time a customer  
25 testifies matters of this nature, and cites in support of that

1 request *State v. Douglas*, 626 SE<sup>d</sup>, 59. The applicant  
2 would move that the objection also applies to documents  
3 and testimony elicited under examination; and requests  
4 that the Chairman defer ruling on the continuing objection  
5 until a final Order is issued in this case.

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, Mr. Hoefer.  
7 Ms. Edwards?

8 MS. EDWARDS: :Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
9 Commissioners. I would like to take a moment to respond  
10 to Mr. Hoefer's remarks.

11 On behalf of the Office of Regulatory Staff, we don't  
12 oppose the process proposed by Mr. Hoefer; however,  
13 we do disagree and do not believe that a complaint has  
14 to be corroborated or substantiated in any way other than  
15 through the customer's testimony. Therefore, we would  
16 respectfully submit that we believe that the testimony the  
17 company objects to is admissible for purposes of this night  
18 hearing. And we also don't believe that the legal authority  
19 cited by the company fully support the grounds for which  
20 they are the basis for their objection. Keeping this in mind,  
21 we would ask that the Commission note our position for  
22 the record, and we would like to reserve our rights to respond  
23 more fully in writing as appropriate.

24 Additionally, we would also ask of the company  
25 that within a reasonable time after this night hearing and



1 once we have the transcript available, that the company  
2 submit in writing the specific portions of the testimony  
3 that they are objecting to along with the reason for the  
4 objection and the identity of the speaker. We believe that  
5 this process would allow anybody who took the time out  
6 of their evening to come and speak here today to know  
7 what portions of their testimony are being objected to.  
8 We believe that this is a fair and reasonable request, and  
9 we would hope that the company would agree.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: We will duly record your  
12 objection and a final ruling will be made.

13 MR. HOEFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 The first person that we call is Mr. Joe Metts. Joe  
16 Metts, please come forward.

17 **WHEREUPON, Joe Metts** first being duly sworn,  
18 assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

19 MS. BOYD: Could you state your name and address  
20 for the record, please?

21 **TESTIMONY BY JOE METTS:**

22 A My name is Joe Metts. My wife and I live at 226 River Forest Drive. We're the  
23 oldest members of that community as far as time that we've been there. I'd  
24 like to thank the Commission for coming. We've met before, we were unhappy  
25 with the results, but we are trying again. I'd like to give a little recap of what's

1 happened in our community since the inception of this United Utilities.

2 United Utilities acquired our sewer system from R&R Environmental in  
3 1983. At that time we were paying \$15.00 a month total for sewage, processing,  
4 everything. [INAUDIBLE] the whole thing at that time. When United took over,  
5 they went to \$15.00 a month, which included processing. That was high at  
6 that time but it was not unreasonable. In 1990 United requested a rate increase  
7 to \$19.00 a month plus actual processing charges. The PSC approved \$15.00  
8 plus actual processing. This represents a 100% increase in costs to us. At this  
9 point, it's getting out of hand, but we're not through yet. In 2002, United requested  
10 an increase to \$27.50 a month. The PSC approved \$18.09. Immediately upon  
11 receiving this charge of \$27.50. United Utilities increased rates to \$25.20 under  
12 bond. Their reason for increasing under bond was, their company was unhappy  
13 with the amount of profits. You know, in private industry, I'm an accountant. I  
14 just can't go out there and raise rates. This is a monopoly. This is unreasonable.

15 There's two ways to improve profits, as you all know. One is to go out  
16 and get more business; another is to become more efficient. They can't become  
17 more efficient because Spartanburg Sewage is doing the processing. The  
18 only thing they collect is off the top. We see these guys maybe once every six  
19 months when they come out there to ride up and down the road or do something. I  
20 have seen very little work done for this \$25.20.

21 United Utilities is now requesting a rate up to \$33.00, which is another  
22 36% increase. I get bills every month. My sewage bill is higher than the  
23 processing bill than the county's for processing is. It's one and a half times the  
24 amount of water they consume, and this water's also processed.

25 And I'd like to ask the Commission — when we met before, and you

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 approved the price of \$18.09, how could you legally three months later turn  
2 around and give the same company \$24.66, and you said you went up there  
3 and audited the books? Now, to me if they were justified \$18.09 at that point,  
4 overhead does not increase that fast.

5 I'd also like to – I've been trying to find out how an utility company from  
6 Chicago can come into South Carolina and pick a little niche like ours, and  
7 perform. Sure, they cannot perform the efficiency of someone around here;  
8 how do they get it? And, one other thing — everybody out there pays the same  
9 amount for sewage every month, whether you've got ten people in your home  
10 or you've got one; that is unfair. It may be unlawful; I'm not sure.

11 The PSC has allowed this company to increase our costs over 800% in  
12 the last 15 years. You know, if I was making \$500 a week back then, I'd have  
13 to be making \$4,000 a week now to keep up with that, and a private company  
14 cannot stay in business doing this, but it appears that the Public Service Com-  
15 mission is really not looking out for the consumers' benefits, as if they should.

16 I'm paying double the amount for sewage as the people that are backed  
17 right up next to me, that my land connects to, and that rubs me wrong every  
18 month when I cut a check for \$45 and knowing that they're getting it for \$24. I  
19 mean, who's looking at the books? You know, the effect on the neighborhood  
20 is drastic. We've got a young couple that's out there that's just moved in. I  
21 talked with them the other day. They didn't even know they had sewage that  
22 they had to pay. They've been there for five months. The Public Service  
23 Commission has not sent them the first bill. Who's paying for their sewage?  
24 We are. So, it's a sloppy-run organization that you guys are approving that  
25 are asking for increases.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1           You know, it's harder to sell houses out there. If you knew that you had  
2           to go in that community and pay \$60 to \$90 a month for water and utilities, you  
3           could go across the street and buy the same house and pay \$24, would you  
4           buy out there? There are houses for sale out there, but nothing is happening.  
5           A lot of us out there are getting old, on retirement and fixed incomes. Every  
6           time I think that I've got ends meet so I can quit work, something goes up.  
7           Sewage goes up, taxes go up. In fact, we're paying taxes on our county, on  
8           our house now, we're paying sewage tax. What benefit is this to us? And, the  
9           sewage when it was put in, when we bought out there originally, the sewage  
10          line that was put in was put in by the contractor. We paid for the sewage line,  
11          for everything that went in, because it was included in the price of the land  
12          when we got it. So, I think that – it tears me up that we're paying twice the amount  
13          of someone that's connected to me.

14                What I'd like to see done, gentlemen, this cannot be feasible to United  
15          Utilities to keep operating this. I would like to see them sell it to Spartanburg  
16          Sewer System or whoever is in charge, buy it out, and let's run it like we run  
17          everything else around the neighborhood. Let's be compatible and  
18          comparable, and I feel we're not. Thank you for your time.

19                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Just a second, sir. We  
20                       might have some questions from the table.

21                       MR. HOEFER: No questions, Mr. Chairman.

22                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Ms. Edwards?

23                       MS. EDWARDS: No questions.

24                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioners? Ms.

25                       Clyburn.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

Q Good evening, Mr. Metts.

A Hi.

Q I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions. You said you were one of the older residents, if not the older — not by age of course, just by —

A It could be my age also.

Q I'll debate that for you, okay. How long have you been —

A We bought the house new in 1974. We are the first owners of the house, and it was the last house in the community —

Q Okay, and again, your issues — you were real clear in terms of what your issue is, and it's price.

A It's price, and I think it's an exorbitant price that we're paying for no service.

Q Yes, sir. I wanted to ask you a bit about service. If I wanted to get a feel for that — can you tell me, give me a snapshot of what type of service you receive.

A What kind of service do you require — I mean, there's a line that goes out in the street and hauls the sewage away, and it's backed up a couple of times over the years, but that's something that really doesn't require service. That's why I'm questioning why are they getting \$25 a month to handle invoicing.

Q Okay. So, let me get clarity here. So, you are sewer only?

A Sewer — the water's on top of that, correct. We pay \$25 a month to the Inman-Campobello Water District for water,

Q Okay, okay. You pay — okay. So, you've got two different bills?

A I get two different bills every month.

Q Okay. I did have another question.

A So, we're looking at \$80, \$89 a month.

1 Q For water and sewer?

2 A Water and sewer.

3 Q You mentioned your neighbors who — the price differential with your  
4 neighbors — and your neighbors are hooked to a municipal system — I was  
5 going to ask you —

6 A Yes, they –

7 Q Let me ask you —

8 A They are hooked to the Spartanburg Sewage System. They connect up to my  
9 lot behind us. The street that we're on, it's basically one street that deadends,  
10 offshoots into their residence and it backs up to other developments that are  
11 right behind us.

12 Q Yes, sir.

13 A My house connects to a duplex sixty feet from it that has Spartanburg Sewage.

14 Q I see. Thank you for the clarity.

15 **EXAMINATION BY CHAIRMAN HAMILTON:**

16 Q Are you in or out of the city limits?

17 A We're outside of the city limits.

18 Q Outside the city limits.

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

20 [No Response]

21 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

22 MR. METTS: Thank you.

23 MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Mr. John M. Davis Jr.,  
24 please.

25

**WHEREUPON, John M. Davis, Jr.** first being duly

sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and  
address for the record, please?

**TESTIMONY BY JOHN M. DAVIS, JR.:**

A My name is John M. Davis Jr. I live at 230 River Forest Drive. I've lived at River Forest for now about 27 years. So, it's a good neighborhood. I like it. We're thankful for all the parties being here and hearing us out.

This neighborhood has a problem, I mean, mainly it's United Utilities, and we need some help. The charges are excessive for a little piece — the charges are excessive for a little piece of pipe. I mean, we're talking about when this pipe comes from the house — we're having to pay out to the curb and then United Utilities from there to the sewer, maybe 10 to 12 feet; that's about it. I mean, the rest of it, if something happens on our side, we pay for it. If it happens on the other side, we call them and they take care of it. Like I said, I've lived there about 27 years, and I could almost have this pipe gold-plated as much as I've put in the pipe. I mean, it's terrible. I mean I don't know when it will end.

Well, what I want to say is, we need to get rid of this company and have a Sewer System take over. If there's some way to do it, I mean, we'll do it. Other neighborhoods up there, like Springfield Subdivision, they had the same problem. The Sewer took over that. I think Bonnevillie had it. The Sewer Commission took over that. I mean, we're just a little neighborhood there. We're an old neighborhood. We're not new houses. You know, most houses are, like Joe, he's lived there the longest. You know, I live two houses away from Joe. There's

1 young people that live up there. There's old people, there's people that's on fixed  
2 incomes, people that are out of work and they've got a lot of kids, they've got  
3 a lot of bills. I mean, we just don't need this excessive charge that they want. I  
4 mean, I think we're paying enough as it is.

5 But, there's no monitoring of this water coming in. I mean, we buy from  
6 the Inman-Campobello Water District, and I've got all my bills right here. It seems  
7 like the water bill is less than the sewer charge, and their charge —their charge  
8 is the highest. The water bill is the lowest. I'm just a one-person family. I've  
9 got one person, me, that lives there by myself. I mean, I pay the same thing  
10 as people with, I mean, they've got six, ten people in a house – pay the same  
11 thing. That's what I want to know. Why do we all pay the same, or not pay at  
12 all? There's some people up there that we talked to that don't pay. It don't – I  
13 mean, they just moved in, but they hadn't found out ahead or something.

14 What I want to know is, if this doesn't go through, can we have a septic  
15 tank put in and just do away with all of that up there. I mean, this neighborhood  
16 just can't keep paying and paying and paying, I mean.

17 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Davis, I think you  
18 have a lot of questions that you'll need to direct to either  
19 the ORS or to the company attorney afterwards. We aren't  
20 in a position to answer your questions.

21 A [Mr. Davis] Okay. I just put it out there.

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: All right, sir. You've done  
23 a good job of putting it out there.

24 A [Mr. Davis] And what I want to know is, when I moved up there, we had a  
25 contract with United Utilities. I don't ever remember signing a contract with them.



1       Where's the contract? Where's does it say that I have to pay that? I know they've  
2       got the pipes out there, so I guess you have to.

3               That's all I want to say, and thanks to all of the Public Service Commission  
4       for being here, everybody being here.

5                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir. Wait just  
6       a minute. We'll see if there's any questions. Ms. Edwards?

7                       MS. EDWARDS: No questions.

8                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any Commissioners have  
9       any questions?

10                      COMMISSONER MITCHELL: I have one, Mr.  
11       Chairman.

12                      CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Mitchell.

13                      COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr.  
14       Chairman.

15       **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER MITCHELL:**

16   Q       Yes, sir, you mentioned about your fee for your sewage was very large; could  
17       you tell me what your sewage fee is, what does it generally run?

18   A       I've got it wrote down right here.

19   Q       An average. Give me the last three bills. Could you just tell me?

20   A       Okay. I've got 2004, okay –

21   Q       No, I would like your last three months. Do you have like your last three months'  
22       sewage bill?

23   A       Sure.

24   Q       Tell what your sewage bill's been in the last three months.

25   A       Okay, 2005 — I've got from January to right now - \$196.72.

1 Q I mean 2006, your last three bills. Do you have your last three bills, current bills?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q That's what I want. Could you just tell me what your last month – can you tell  
4 me what your last month bill was?

5 A Last month's bill?

6 Q Yes, sir.

7 A \$16.12 water.

8 Q What's sewage?

9 A For sewage - \$22.20. United Utilities - \$24.66.

10 Q The \$22.20 was for water or —

11 A The District sewage charge, district treatment charge.

12 Q And the full fee was what, \$24?

13 A \$24.66, that's what their charge is. Everybody pays \$24.66. I don't use that  
14 much water. My minimum bill is \$16.12. That's what Inman-Campobello Water  
15 District charges, minimum bill, \$16.12, whether you use any or not.

16 Q And the minimum fee is \$24.66. Is that the minimum fee each month?

17 A Yes, sir.

18 Q Okay.

19 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr.

20 Chairman. That's all I have.

21 **EXAMINATION BY CHAIRMAN HAMILTON:**

22 Q So, you pay \$24.66 plus \$20 –

23 A Yes, sir.

24 Q All right.

25 A And, also on our home taxes and car taxes, we're often charged for that sewer

1 on top of all that.

2 Q Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any other  
4 questions?

5 Mr. Howard.

6 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER HOWARD:**

7 Q On your bill, how much water do you use a month for the \$22.20? Do you  
8 remember?

9 A \$600.12

10 Q How many gallons does that represent, do you know? Do you have that number?

11 A I'd have to go back on my bills. I've got them right here.

12 Q Well, you were charged, I believe I had a figure here of \$342 — how did the  
13 treatment charge figure, I guess is my question. How did they arrive at that?

14 A I don't know how it's broken down. I think it's the days of the month, they charge  
15 you so much. But, they charge, United Utilities, \$24.66 whether it's 28 days or  
16 32 days, or 31 days.

17 **FURTHER EXAMINATION BY CHAIRMAN HAMILTON:**

18 Q But, the sewer charge is not based anywhere — there's no relationship between  
19 the sewer charge and the water charge?

20 A No. Nothing's monitored up there, so you pay it.

21 Q You have a fixed water charge also?

22 A No, it starts at a minimum of \$16.12 whether you use any or not. I'm just a one  
23 person family. I don't use that much water. Somebody with probably a lot more  
24 in the family, they will be up above that.

25

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Wright.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER WRIGHT:**

Q Just for clarification, did you say that you were on a fixed income or did you just say –

A No, I work for the Spartanburg School.

Q So, you said there were many people in the District, or the neighborhood?

A There are a lot of people in the neighborhood on a fixed income.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir, very much.

MR. DAVIS: Thank you very much.

MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Tammy Sell, please.  
Tammy Sell.

**WHEREUPON, Tammy Sell** first being duly sworn,  
assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and  
address for the record, please?

**TESTIMONY BY TAMMY SELL:**

A My name is Tammy Sell. I live at 232 River Forest Drive with my family. I bought my house in 1997 or '98, I can't remember exactly when. I was one of those people that was not told about the charge, the sewer charge. I'd say five months later, I got a disconnection notice in certified mail. And I was charged for the person that previously lived there that didn't pay theirs and for the five months that I had been living there. I had no idea what this was. I called them, and they said that this is what you have to pay or it's going to be cut off. So, of course, I had to pay it. I got the bill for the past five months, and my sewer runs a total

1 of about \$41.80.

2 The last time that I had really had anything to say about this is when I  
3 had a contractor come out in my front yard, because I had let my bill get behind.  
4 I'd lost my job. And I noticed a contractor in my front yard, digging up my front  
5 yard, and I came out there and I asked him what was going on, and he said  
6 that they were representing the sewer company and they were putting in a stop  
7 from the line to the road to back it up if they wanted to have it cut off. I tried to  
8 tell them that I didn't want them digging up my front yard, and they said they  
9 had the right to do that. They said that they were doing this to people that – to  
10 people that are known to get behind on their bill. It's like every so often you'll  
11 go through the neighborhood and you'll see little orange tags hanging on mail-  
12 boxes, and you know this is people that they're fixing to cut off their sewer.  
13 You know, when you lose your job or are on a fixed income or anything can  
14 happen and you get behind on this, this is something that you would think  
15 you could put in – at the bottom of your bills. But, it's not because it will back  
16 up into your house. So, you have to find some way to pay it. You know, people  
17 that's on a fixed income, you know, what are they going to choose — food or  
18 pay their utility bill?

19 And I was just wanting to add to some of what other people have said  
20 and just to say that I was one of those people that bought the house, did not  
21 know that there was a sewer bill, and about the contractor coming in and wanting  
22 to cut off the sewer. That's basically all I had to say.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Let's see if we have any  
24 questions. Commissioner Clyburn.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

Q Ms. — spell your last name.

A S-E-L-L.

Q Okay. I guess I was thinking more science. So, you said that there was —  
getting back to the more visible part of it. I know that you're talking about the  
fee. But, you're saying that there's an orange, that there's a tag on your mailbox?

A Yes, they'll come through and place orange tags on your mailbox if you get  
behind on your sewer bill.

Q And, you know that's —

A I mean, you can tell that that's how you know that they're fixing to cut off your  
sewer. I mean, that's how they let you know. I mean, it's just a slip of paper, it's  
orange, and it's telling your behind on your sewer bill.

Q And that is on the outside?

A It's on the outside of your mailbox, and it's hung on the flag. I've had them on  
my doors. I've had them on the flag on my mailbox, and I still have big orange  
writing that they spray-painted on my road in front of my residence where they  
were contracting to put in that block.

Q With this piece of paper, is there something on it?

A Um-hum.

Q It's like a —

A A notice.

Q A notice.

A Um-hum.

Q But, it's not inside your mailbox; it's outside of your mailbox?

A On the outside of your mailbox, and it's for everybody to read.

- 1 Q You've said you've been here since — you've been here about 8 years?
- 2 A Yes.
- 3 Q So, you think. Okay, and that's an ongoing practice. I mean, I'm not trying — I
- 4 guess I am getting into your business by asking you, but I'm trying to see —
- 5 this has been a long standing practice in terms of the piece of paper you're
- 6 talking about?
- 7 A Yes, ma'am. I've lost my job and went through a divorce and stuff like that and
- 8 had just several incidences in my life to where I would get behind on bills, and
- 9 you know, I know when that orange notice is on my mailbox, hanging on my
- 10 door, then as I've caught mine up, you would see them throughout the
- 11 neighborhood.
- 12 Q Let me ask you this also. You get a monthly bill that I'm assuming about the
- 13 same time every month
- 14 A Um-hum.
- 15 Q And if you were to fall behind, say, fall behind 30 days, you get something that's
- 16 written within an envelope. Give me a sequence.
- 17 A You get something that's written inside of an envelope.
- 18 Q I'm assuming at the 30 days in arrears?
- 19 A Yes.
- 20 Q Okay.
- 21 A And then you'll get the little red notice on your mailbox.
- 22 Q What timeframe would that be?
- 23 A I'm not for sure.
- 24 Q Okay.
- 25 A Then, I guess, some time within that period you'll get a certified letter in the

1 mail saying that they're going to cut it off, because they told me they have to  
2 send you the certified letter first before they cut it off.

3 Q Okay. Okay.

4 A Once you receive that certified letter, once you have it reconnected, you have  
5 to pay another \$250 fee to have it reconnected.

6 Q Okay. \$250 fee for reconnection?

7 A \$250 to have it reconnected if you have it cut off. They said that that was their  
8 whole purpose of putting in all these systems, to have everything shut off, where  
9 it will back up into your house.

10 Q So, okay, so from the first time — I'm following a sequence. From the first time  
11 you were to get the — from the first time that you would get your bill to the point  
12 where you would get your disconnection notice, because I'm going to assume  
13 like, because you know this, you've been through this process.

14 A Yeah.

15 Q What kind of timeframe are we looking?

16 A I'd say a three-month period.

17 Q Three-month period, okay. Thank you for being candid.

18 A Um, hum.

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

20 Commissioner Wright.

21 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER WRIGHT:**

22 Q Ms. Sell, you mentioned that when you didn't know that they had a sewer charge,  
23 a bill, and that you got a disconnect notice, and there was a large amount of  
24 money that you had to pay, not just for you but for the previous resident?

25 A Um, hum.



1 Q Was anything ever done about that?

2 A I did have that taken off. They did – once I told them that I was a new resident  
3 there, they did take it off.

4 Q Okay. I just wanted to be sure of that.

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

6 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Fleming.

8 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

9 Q They put the notice, they hang it on the outside of the mailbox?

10 A Yes, ma'am.

11 Q Have you checked with the Postal Service to see if that's an appropriate thing  
12 to do?

13 A No, I have not. But, I've had them hang it on my door and then it's like, I guess,  
14 they don't want to get out to hang it on the door so they started hanging it on  
15 the mailboxes. But when I really got disturbed about it is when I found the big  
16 red writing in front of my residence. I called the water company, the cable  
17 company, the power company, and it never struck my mind to call the sewer  
18 company. The power company told me that well maybe I should try the sewer  
19 company.

20 Q So, you feel like the procedure they use really lets the entire neighborhood  
21 know that you're –

22 A Oh, yes, because I have to say that writing, that writing is probably a good 2  
23 feet, I mean, 2 by 2.

24 Q There was no notice at that time?

25 A There was no notice at that time.

1 Q That they were coming to disconnect?

2 A That they were coming out. I had to call them and say, you know, what's going  
3 on. When I called the utility company, they still couldn't tell me what was going  
4 on and then I just happen to notice the contractor out in my front yard, digging  
5 up my front yard. Then I asked him what's going on, and he said these are for  
6 people that are known to get behind. We're putting these throughout the whole  
7 neighborhood, but we're starting with the people that are more known to get  
8 behind on their bills.

9 Q You had not gotten a bill previously before the first notice came that they were  
10 going to disconnect? Right after you moved in, you said four months later you  
11 got this?

12 A Yes.

13 Q That was the first bill?

14 A I assumed that the bill that was coming in was for the person that was previously  
15 there.

16 Q Oh, it wasn't in your name?

17 A It wasn't in my name, and it's illegal to open up somebody else's mail, so I  
18 never knew anything about it. The person that sold the house to me failed to  
19 mention it. Then I started getting like – I can't remember exactly how I went  
20 about finding out that I did have a sewer bill.

21 Q Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Hoefer.

23 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

24 Q Ms. Sell, let me just ask you a question to make sure I understand. Your sewer  
25 service has never been disconnected, is that right?

1 A No, it has not.

2 Q Okay, thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

4 [No Response]

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am.

6 A Thank you.

7 MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Tommy Cook, please.

8 Tommy Cook.

9 **WHEREUPON, Tommy Cook** first being duly sworn,  
10 assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

11 MS. BOYD: Please state your name and address  
12 for the record.

13 **TESTIMONY BY TOMMY COOK:**

14 A My name is Tommy Cook. I live at 534 Beaver Court in Spartanburg. I am not  
15 a resident of the area, but I do own property there that we rent.

16 Our complaint is that this utility company has always been extremely  
17 high. We have single, one bedroom apartments, and they charge us the same  
18 price that they charge a four-bedroom house with six or seven people living in  
19 it, and we feel like that's unfair, and obviously if they go up, it will be more  
20 unfair. We've owned the property about 25 years. We have trouble renting  
21 our properties because we're \$40 of \$50 a month higher than folks across the  
22 street. That's our complaint.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any questions?

24 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: I have a question.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Mitchell.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER MITCHELL:**

Q Yes, sir. That is a minimum fee that you're paying?

A That's correct.

Q And you're telling me that the minimum fee is the same as any house; is that what you're telling us? Could you tell me the comparison there?

A We pay exactly the same thing as any house.

Q The minimum fee if what?

A \$24.66 and then they tack on another \$8 or \$9 to the Spartanburg Waterworks on top of that, no matter how much water we use.

Q And is that all, \$24.66 plus the \$8?

A It winds up being about \$31.

Q \$31?

A Right.

Q That's only for sewage?

A That's correct.

Q You have other places that you rent throughout the area, and how does that compare?

A It's about three times the cost, because most of the time we have a building with one tap that has a sewer that's charged for water, you know, it goes with the water system. So, they charge us for how much water we use, and relatively it's about three times the cost.

Q You say that would be the average for all the others?

A Yes, sir.

Q Thank you.

A Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Anyone else?

Commissioner Clyburn.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

Q This is a follow-up to that, Mr. Cook. Again, you said you own a series of apartment complexes on this property and elsewhere outside of this sewer district, coverage area I should say.

A Right.

Q The other areas that you mentioned with the cost disparity, are you saying that all of those are metered properties and this is the only unmetered property?

A Yes. We don't have a lot, but the ones that we compare to are metered. So, theirs is based on water usage, as opposed to the set fee.

Q In terms of your density, how many apartments are we looking at if you don't mind me asking.

A I have eight one-bedroom apartments.

Q So, you're saying this is a definite – this pricing structure is a definite economic impact to you?

A When we first built these apartments, we tried to have the tenants to pay the sewer. They would stay two months and leave because their sewer was, again, a lot higher than what they'd been used to paying.

Q So, your answer to that was to roll that into the amount of rent?

A So, we rolled it into the rent. So, we collect the money for them because we can't – so, we're doing some of their job by collecting their rent. We pay their rent every month, I mean pay their sewage charge every month. We've also have been 25 years of paying the full charges to them every month for like these apartments were full. So, if we've got a vacancy, we're still paying a

1 sewage charge. Now, just a couple of months ago they said, well, if you'll mark  
2 on your ticket they were vacant that month, we won't charge you for that. But,  
3 that was just a month or two ago that we knew that information.

4 Q Okay. Thank you.

5 **EXAMINATION BY CHAIRMAN HAMILTON:**

6 Q Do you receive eight single bills?

7 A Absolutely.

8 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions? Mr.  
9 Hoefer.

10 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

11 Q Mr. Cook, are these the apartments that are owned by Cook and —

12 A That's correct.

13 Q And a couple of these are quadraplexes, is that right?

14 A There's two quadraplexes, eight apartments.

15 Q Okay. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Anyone else?

17 *[No Response]*

18 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

19 A Thank you.

20 MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Rickey Skipper, please.  
21 Rickey Skipper.

22 MR. SKIPPER: I'm going to decline.

23 MR. BUTLER: Okay, thank you, Mr. Skipper.

24 We'll go to Cecile Sallis, please.

25 MS. CAROLYN SMITH: There are two names

1 there — Cecile Sallis and Carolyn Reed Smith. I can't do  
2 it under Sallis.

3 MS. BOYD: You can state your name for the  
4 record.

5 **WHEREUPON, Carolyn Smith** first being duly  
6 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

7 MS. BOYD: All right. Would you state your name  
8 and address for the record, please?

9 **TESTIMONY BY CAROLYN SMITH:**

10 A My name is Carolyn Reed Smith. The building is in my mother's name, Cecile  
11 Sallis, but she lived with me at the time, and that we moved in, and she had  
12 moved out of the apartment. So, I live there now. At the time that I moved in, it  
13 was myself, my mother, my son, and my daughter, and then, you know, in the  
14 process, now it's just my husband and I.

15 So, I wanted to talk about the billing basically. I wanted to say that in  
16 the process of time that I've lived here, there has been two increases. I was  
17 there when we had — we came to the fire department, and we reputed a bill  
18 that we were paying like \$24 a month and then now, it's gone from \$24 a  
19 month to \$41 a month. In contrast, the City of Spartanburg, our bill is the same  
20 size for a monthly bill that they have every two months. It is not every month.  
21 They have bi-monthly billing. I went down, and I talked to them, and basically, you  
22 know, just asked them some questions, you know, how much do they charge,  
23 how much water do they process — and, they said per unit, you know, which is  
24 so many gallons, 900 and something gallons, they charge a flat rate, and they  
25 go by the amount of money — amount of water that a person uses. And that's

1       how they charge.

2               So I sort of posed in my mind the process. Well, I've been here long  
3       enough to see a person double the amount that they charge, then why isn't it  
4       that there isn't a more efficient billing situation? So, I'm sitting here, and I just  
5       listened to a man that said he has a place where four families live a quadra-  
6       plex, four families, I guess it's quad — four people live there, four families —  
7       and they're paying the same amount that I'm paying for my husband and I  
8       right now. So, I just wanted to know, why couldn't they be like Duke Power,  
9       okay, and Duke Power, they might take your month, they watch your billing  
10      for 12 months and they estimate, they average it and estimate how much  
11      you're going to pay and then that way all of the times that they're higher, the  
12      times that they're lower, you just pay one flat rate. Would that be so hard for  
13      them to do, especially since they're getting so much return on a \$1 — they  
14      paid \$1 in 1970, so they're getting a thousand, million times how much they,  
15      you know, they really earned for this place.

16             Or, could they be like Equifax where anybody, anytime you go to buy a  
17      car and then they can type up in the computer and then get all of your information.  
18      This computer system is something wonderful. I wish I could understand it,  
19      but I know that when I go and buy this car then they can type in a number and  
20      come up with all this information. Why couldn't United Utilities have that same  
21      connection with our water system so that they could directly relate what we're  
22      paying to the water? But, they're asking for more money, but we're not seeing  
23      anymore of an efficient way of billing.

24             Well, of course, it's already been said, and I'll say it again, that the way  
25      that they get rid of the sewage can't be anymore efficient because they're not



1 processing it. The City is processing it. So, there's no problem with that. They're  
2 not having to pay any more than that. So, why can't the billing system be a  
3 little bit more fair for people that are on a fixed income, people that only have  
4 one or two people in the household.

5 And secondly, when it comes to billing for businesses, I was looking  
6 here and it says that a business place pays a flat rate as well. Well, what if  
7 that business is a restaurant where they're having two and three people every  
8 hour come in and flush, you know, that kind of thing. Why aren't all of these  
9 things taken into consideration before they ask for it or prove that they're taking  
10 this money and using it wisely.

11 That's the key thing. If I've had to pay for these many years, and I've  
12 seen this increase and another increase, then I wouldn't mind if it were really  
13 directly related to how much water I was using. So, that billing system is very  
14 inadequate. They haven't tried to change it in 30 years, and they're just using  
15 this as their little "sugar daddy".

16 Thank you.

17 [Applause]

18 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any questions?

19 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I do.

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Wright.

21 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER WRIGHT:**

22 Q Ms. Smith, what was your address?

23 A 254 River Forest Drive.

24 Q 254. How many years have you lived there?

25 A Off and on for five years.

1 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other Commissioners?

2 Commissioner Howard.

3 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER HOWARD:**

4 Q Your billing, you say you pay \$41 a month for sewer?

5 A Yes.

6 Q That would be the \$24.66 flat rate plus your treatment fee which is based on  
7 the amount of water you use?

8 A It is not based on the amount of water. It's just a flat rate.

9 Q Everybody pays the same treatment fee and the same —

10 A Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am.

12 MR. HOEFER: Excuse me, if I could ask one  
13 question.

14 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

15 Q What's the lady's name you mentioned? I think her name was Cecile.

16 A That's my mother.

17 Q What's her name?

18 A Cecile Sallis.

19 Q Could you spell the last name for me, please?

20 A S-A-L-L-I-S.

21 Q The account is in her name?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am.

25 MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Beverly Wade, please.

1 Beverly Wade.

2 **WHEREUPON, Beverly Wade,** first being duly  
3 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

4 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and  
5 address for the record?

6 **TESTIMONY BY BEVERLY WADE:**

7 A My name is Beverly Wade, and I'm at 257 River Forest Drive. I've been at  
8 River Forest – I've been at 257 River Forest Drive for three years now. I'm a  
9 teacher; I get paid monthly.

10 The sellers of my home, they never disconnected the sewage. I had to  
11 pay \$75 and a first month's bill, which ended up being a \$135. I sent a money  
12 order. United Utilities lost my money order, and I had to pay it again. We've  
13 searched for my money order. It had cleared and everything, but they never  
14 credited it to my account. I was never notified by United Utilities that I had a  
15 sewage bill. I have wonderful neighbors who told me prior to me moving there  
16 that I would have to pay sewage. They told me in 2001-2002 they had already  
17 had an increase and when I moved in, my sewage bill is approximately \$44 to  
18 \$48 every month. That's just my sewage bill. I moved from Duncan Park in  
19 the City, and what I paid in sewage and water bill per month is about \$65, and  
20 I was paying that same amount for [INAUDIBLE]. I live by myself, and I'm paying  
21 monthly. When I got a notice in the mail that it was going up to, I believe about  
22 \$65, with water and sewage included, that means I will be paying over \$80 a  
23 month for water and sewage.

24 I've never met anyone from United Utilities. I've never received a call  
25 from anyone with United Utilities. Unless my neighbors notified me, I wouldn't

1 be paying a sewage bill, or I wouldn't know I had one. So, I guess my concern  
2 is, for all this money I'm paying, what exactly are they doing.

3 [Applause]

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioners, any  
5 questions? Commissioner Clyburn.

6 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

7 Q Ms. Wade, again, you said you moved in three years ago?

8 A Yes, ma'am.

9 Q You said you were made aware that there was going to be a separate – I'm  
10 assuming your water bill was coming to you?

11 A No, ma'am.

12 Q I mean, the water bill I guess is something — because in dealing with this  
13 company we're just talking about sewer.

14 A Yes, ma'am.

15 Q So, let me rephrase the question if you'd allow me to. You did not physically  
16 get any type of bill from the company?

17 A No, ma'am. And, again, the sewage was never disconnected from the sellers  
18 of the home, but I had to pay a reconnection fee and for new service, but it was  
19 never disconnected.

20 Q How did you know to do that –

21 A My neighbors informed me.

22 Q Then your next step was to call the company?

23 A My neighbors told me that I needed to call United Utilities because I had to  
24 pay for sewage, but I was never notified by United Utilities that I would have  
25 to pay a sewage fee.

1 Q You never got a bill from the previous – you know, there was never a physical  
2 bill for the previous occupants?

3 A No, ma'am, no, ma'am. I'm assuming that if I didn't initiate the call to United  
4 Utilities, then I would have received a disconnection notice. But, again, the  
5 sellers never disconnected it. They kept everything; the water on and the  
6 sewage. So, when I purchased the home, basically all I should have paid was  
7 a transfer fee, in my opinion. But, I had to pay a reconnection fee for something  
8 that was never disconnected.

9 Q Okay, got you on that. My question goes back to your attempts to comply with,  
10 quote-unquote, "reconnection process", and you said you went, and I don't  
11 know is there a policy since you would be a first time client – but, you went  
12 and physically got a money order.

13 A Yes, ma'am. I sent a money order to Columbia for my reconnection fee, and I  
14 believe it's my first month's bill. It's about \$135.

15 Q Okay.

16 A Well, I got a bill. When I received my first bill, it said that if you don't pay such  
17 and such amount, your sewage would be disconnected. It was the same amount  
18 that I had sent. I called and I said, I sent a money order, and they told me to  
19 call because they hadn't credited that \$135 to my account.

20 Q Okay.

21 A My money order, I called and had it traced, and it was deposited by United  
22 Utilities, but I never received that credit. So, I had to send that \$135 again.  
23 So, where I was supposed to pay \$135, ending up paying \$270.

24 Q Got you. That was, again, after three years that was never –

25 A No, ma'am, no, ma'am. I've never received credit for that. But, because I do

1 not want my sewage to be disconnected, I paid that bill again. But, again, I've  
2 never met anyone from United Utilities. I've never seen a truck or anything in  
3 my neighborhood, and I don't understand the process of collecting sewage.  
4 But, just for me, I shouldn't pay the same amount for a full family. I guess I am  
5 on a fixed income, because I'm paid monthly, and I get the same thing every  
6 month regardless of what my bills are.

7 Q Okay. I appreciate the feedback. Thank you.

8 A Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other  
10 Commissioners?

11 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

12 Q Yes, I'd like to ask about the money order. Do you have receipts for both of  
13 those money orders?

14 A Yes, ma'am. I have a receipt. I sent a check the second time because I figured  
15 maybe if they didn't get the money order, maybe I'd get a check; my checks  
16 come back to me. But, I still have the receipt for the money order, and I have  
17 the number and everything. It was never found, but it was noted that it was  
18 deposited by United Utilities.

19 Q I think it would be good if we could have a copy of that.

20 A That's not a problem. That's not a problem. Not a problem at all.

21 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Did you bring it with you  
22 by any chance?

23 MS. WADE: No, sir. I didn't.

24 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Fleming,  
25 would you like to request a late filed exhibit?

1 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Yes, I would.

2 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you would after the  
3 meeting talk with counselor Boyd and she can give you  
4 the information on how to supply that.

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Hoefer?

6 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

7 Q Ms. Wade, the receipt your describing, that's what you got when you purchased  
8 the money order?

9 A Yes, sir. They give you a number to trace a money order.

10 Q When you notified the company of this, did they ask you to provide them with  
11 a copy of the cancelled money order?

12 A Yes, sir. I did all of that – not the cancelled money order. I provided them with  
13 the information that I got from the money order that I purchased.

14 Q How do you know that the money order was deposited? Somebody from the  
15 money order company tell you that?

16 A Yes, sir. It's a number on the back, and they'll tell you the day it was deposited  
17 and who deposited it.

18 Q And can you tell me who that money order company was?

19 A I can't remember, but I can bring you the receipt.

20 Q Well, but now the receipt just shows that you bought a money order. What I'm  
21 asking you is, do you have any documentation that shows that the money  
22 order was deposited?

23 A No, sir, I don't. I sure don't.

24 **EXAMINATION BY VICE CHAIRMAN MOSELEY:**

25 Q He's kind of answered my question. It's kind of like being in a rock and a hard

1 place, you cannot get a copy of a money order and cash it; very hard. All  
2 you've got is the receipt that she had. I've been involved in this. I'm aware of  
3 that. Thank you, ma'am. You answered what I needed.

4 A Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Ms. Wade, if you'll supply  
6 that information, talk to Ms. Boyd. It'll be late filed exhibit  
7 No. 1, and we'll see that all parties receive a copy of the  
8 information that we receive.

9 MS. WADE: Yes, sir.

10 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: And the cancelled  
12 check.

13 [HEARING EXHIBIT # RESERVED]

14 MR. BUTLER: We'd like to call Paul Houle, please.  
15 Paul Houle.

16 **WHEREUPON, Paul Houle** first being duly sworn,  
17 assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

18 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and  
19 address for the record, please?

20 **TESTIMONY BY PAUL HOULE:**

21 A My name is Paul Houle, and I live on 101 Forest View Drive in the River Forest  
22 Subdivision.

23 I think what we're talking about here tonight is choice or the lack of  
24 choice that the residents of River Forest Subdivision have on United Utilities  
25 Company. We do not have a choice to go with another company. We certainly



1 don't have the choice to be charged by usage, nor do we have the choice to  
2 put a septic system in our yard, when we believe, which I know everyone here  
3 tonight believes United Utilities Company is charging too much for our sewage.

4 I'll be very short, and all I'm going to do is I'm going to ask the Public  
5 Works Commission to please do not put the interest of an out-of-state company  
6 before the interests of the residents of the state that you belong.

7 Thank you very much.

8 [Applause]

9 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioners?

10 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

11 Q Mr. Houle, I respect you for being brief since we have to get back on the  
12 highway. Let me ask you a couple of questions.

13 A Sure.

14 Q Did you – how long have you lived there?

15 A I've lived there for eight years. I am also one of those who – I bought the house  
16 in June of '99 and in November was when I realized United Utilities, I believe,  
17 contacted me and I had to give them a nice little check, and that's a Christmas  
18 present I should say, in November because I had to catch up on all my months.

19 Q Okay. When you – again, I'm assuming this was, again, you said eight years  
20 ago, and you went from – you were new to that particular residence.

21 A That's correct.

22 Q Let me ask you this because I'm curious whether you had the same experience  
23 as Ms. Wade and that – the experience was the same I guess on front end  
24 because you did not know about this relationship with —

25 A Absolutely.

1 Q Did you have to pay a reconnection fee or did you continue?

2 A Some times I don't remember what I had for dinner last night, so asking me  
3 what happened eight years ago — I'm not trying to be smart. I honestly don't  
4 know. I may be able to go back and check, and I will gladly give the Commission  
5 any sort of documentation that I have about that.

6 Q Okay. Again, I'm kind of curious whether or not the beginnings of the relationship  
7 were similar, to be honest with you.

8 A I believe, if I could just mention, make a comment of what you're saying. I  
9 believe there's a pattern behavior here.

10 Q If you — if my Chair will allow me to — you can tell I'm the trouble-maker in the  
11 group, but, if my Chair will allow me to, if we could hold that open as a late  
12 filed if you were able to put your hands on that to see whether or not, you  
13 know, again, your relationship —

14 A Sure. I'll do anything I can to make sure that, you know, United Utilities does  
15 not increase our rates, absolutely.

16 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you do have the  
17 information, please provide it, and we'll make sure all the  
18 parties get a copy of it.

19 MR. HOULE: I certainly will.

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other Commissioners  
21 have a question?

22 *[No Response]*

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Hoefer?

24 MR. HOEFER: No questions, Mr. Chairman.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Sir, if you get it, It will be

1 filed as a late filed exhibit. Thank you, sir.

2 [HEARING EXHIBIT #2 RESERVED]

3 MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Elaine King. Elaine  
4 King, please.

5 **WHEREUPON, Elaine King** first being duly sworn,  
6 assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

7 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
8 for the record, please?

9 **TESTIMONY BY ELAINE KING:**

10 A I'm Elaine King, P.O. Box 233, Tigerville, South Carolina. I would like to give  
11 you some information —

12 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman?

13 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, sir.

14 MR. HOEFER: It's come to my attention that Ms.  
15 King may be affiliated with North Greenville College; they  
16 are an Intervenor in this case. And as I understood Mr.  
17 Butler's comments at the beginning, an Intervenor would  
18 not be allowed to testify here and at the hearing in Columbia.

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Ma'am, do you understand  
20 that, Ms. King, that if you are a part of North Greenville  
21 group and if you testify here, you will not be able to intervene  
22 in the Columbia hearing? So, you just have the choice of  
23 which one you would prefer.

24 MR. DUKE K. McCALL JR.: May it please, Mr.  
25 Chairman, I'm the attorney for North Greenville College.

1 My name is Duke McCall with the Leatherwood law firm.  
2 North Greenville would elect to appear on August 28<sup>th</sup> in  
3 Columbia as opposed to here.

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: That will be fine, sir. We'll  
5 expect you on that day. Thank you, sir.

6 MR. McCALL: All right, sir.

7 MR. BUTLER: We call Rebecca Zabel. Rebecca  
8 Zabel, please.

9 MS. ZABEL: I am also an attorney representing  
10 North Greenville, so I would [INAUDIBLE] Thank you.

11 MR. BUTLER: Thank you very much.

12 I'd like to call Ponease Gosnell, please. Ms.  
13 Gosnell.

14 **WHEREUPON, Ponease Gosnell,** first being  
15 duly sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

16 MS. BOYD: Could you state your name and  
17 address for the record?

18 **TESTIMONY BY PONEASE GOSNELL:**

19 A My name is Mary Ponease Gosnell. I live at 213 River Forest Drive, Boiling  
20 Springs, South Carolina.

21 I moved into this neighborhood twenty-some-odd years ago, and I have  
22 experienced basically what everyone else here has said today that they have  
23 experienced, which is, we feel like we're being double-taxed. We also feel like  
24 we're not getting anything from service. When I moved in there was no notice  
25 that I was going to be billed for sewage. I got a notice in the mail for a prior

1       tenant — excuse me, owner of the home — and I tried to get in touch with these  
2       people, and I couldn't. So, getting in touch with United Utilities, they tell me that  
3       if I wanted to stay in that house and not have my sewage turned off, I would  
4       also have to pay the previous three months, which I did. I paid their three months  
5       and mine too.

6               Time has gone on, I have another letter here from another lady that works  
7       at [INAUDIBLE] today, and two people in our neighborhood asked that I represent  
8       them, which [INAUDIBLE]. So, we do have people other than that are here that  
9       are very concerned about what's going on. When we do have a problem in  
10      the neighborhood with the sewage, [INAUDIBLE] we have a problem getting to  
11      United Utilities to get them to come out and do something about the problem;  
12      and then when something's done, they're trying to bill us for it when it's on  
13      their property, and this is coming from some of my neighbors.

14                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Could you be more specific,  
15                       please, ma'am?

16   A       [*Ms. Gosnell*] Other neighbors —

17                       CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Excuse me just a second.

18                       MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, to the extent that the  
19                       witness proposes to read the letter she brought, we would  
20                       object to that at this time.

21   A       [*Ms. Gosnell*] I'm not reading a letter. This is a letter served on one of my  
22                       neighbors.

23                       MR. HOEFER: We would object on the grounds of  
24                       hearsay.

1 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you would like to present  
2 the letter —

3 A [Ms. Gosnell] But, sir, I was there and saw them put —

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: We'll rule on the objection  
5 in the final order.

6 A [Ms. Gosnell] I was there, and I saw what was going on.

7 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Okay, if you can testify of  
8 your own knowledge, that would be much better.

9 A [Ms. Gosnell] All right. I saw them come out, and they made a big mess. They  
10 do not replant the grass or do anything that I have seen to correct any of the  
11 problems that they create.

12 **EXAMINATION BY CHAIRMAN HAMILTON:**

13 Q Was it a sewage backup that they were attempting to correct?

14 A Yes, right.

15 Now, on the other side, I have a neighbor who's only been there maybe  
16 six or seven years, and they've had the same problem. They've been out there  
17 two or three times, and each time he's paid, and I've seen him write the check.  
18 And going forth in the same way, United Utilities has told him the same thing,  
19 you know, that he has to pay this.

20 But, let's go on. I feel like we — it keeps going — our sewage bill keeps  
21 going up. I'm one person in one home. There's nowhere to meter it, there's  
22 nowhere to judge how much sewage I'm using for, say, a family down the street  
23 that has six or seven people living there. So I feel that we should be bought  
24 out by Fort Mill sewage sanitation system or we should be allowed to have a  
25 right to put in a septic tank.

1 I think that the whole system is unfair. And, basically everything, to my  
2 knowledge, has been said before, and I'm in agreement with everyone.

3 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do any of the  
4 Commissioners – Commissioner Wright.

5 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER WRIGHT:**

6 Q Ms. Gosnell, I want to go back to your previous tenant; when you moved in you  
7 said you had to – you paid your bill plus their bill?

8 A I paid three months for them, sir.

9 Q Was that ever settled between you and United?

10 A No, sir. I called and called them, and what happened we could not find the  
11 people that had moved; they moved out of state. They had a three month —  
12 you understand what I'm saying, they owed three months.

13 Q Yes, ma'am.

14 A And I had moved in, and they were three months behind , so I had to pick up  
15 that bill to continue to live there, or that's what they told me anyway.

16 Q That was never settled with you?

17 A No, sir. I just finally went ahead and paid it to keep from getting bad credit or  
18 late notices, which is what they were more or less telling me I was going to be  
19 doing, you know. I have excellent credit and certainly didn't want to ruin it.  
20 [INAUDIBLE] this is not really what this is all about. It's about our inability to be  
21 able to seem to get through that we're overcharged for something that, I mean,  
22 we're not really getting very much for it. You go in there and flush you commode  
23 maybe once a day if you're home very much, you know, maybe three times.  
24 Someone else down the street may flush his twenty times.

25 As far as the treatment of the sewage, you know, that's in addition to

1 the charge which I'm being billed. I think mine comes to around \$42, \$41.89,  
2 something like that a month.

3 Q I understand. I hear you loud and clear, very well, trying to get — you know,  
4 there's a lot of fairness issues here too, just want to be sure things are being  
5 handled properly from beginning to end.

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other Commissioners?

7 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

8 Q Ms. Gosnell, what's the origin of the first name?

9 A Mary, I'm a Native American. My last name is American.

10 Q Okay. So, Ponease, is that your — is it hyphenated or is that —

11 A Mary — then Ponease is my middle name, and I'm addressed by my middle  
12 name.

13 Q Okay, interesting name. That's not my question, I just wanted to — it's an  
14 interesting name. I kind of like that. Again, you made mention you wanted to  
15 maintain your credit so you went ahead and paid for three months of service  
16 that you did not use.

17 A Right.

18 Q Were you able to just continue —

19 A It was no break in service.

20 Q Okay. Thank you.

21 A I continued, when I paid it, they continued the service, you know. And, I do have  
22 a letter here from a lady in the neighborhood that couldn't come; could I —

23 Q You're going to have to ask my Chairman. I know I may sound a little brassy  
24 and authoritative, but the guy in the middle is the guy you need to address.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Ms. Gosnell, we'll be



1 happy to — if you'll give the letter to Ms. Boyd, we'll be  
2 happy to accept it. You could mail it in the morning – 37¢,  
3 we'll save you the 37¢. 39¢, we'll save you that, but it will  
4 be accepted and it'll be distributed.

5 MR. HOEFER: We object to that on the grounds of  
6 hearsay, Mr. Chairman.

7 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, we'll note that.  
8 Commissioner Fleming.

9 MS. GOSNELL: You could get in contact with this  
10 lady by phone or letter, sir, if you'd like to, if you don't accept  
11 my word for this.

12 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you.

13 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

14 Q Ms. Gosnell, I wanted to ask — we've heard, you said this tonight, and we've  
15 heard other people say this tonight — that you would like to go under the  
16 Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District. Has the neighborhood or the subdivision  
17 checked into the procedures that you go through to do that?

18 A I have not done that.

19 Q Okay. I was just curious. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions? Mr.  
21 Hoefer.

22 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

23 Q Yes, Ms. Gosnell, did you move into the house in 1986, did you say?

24 A It was in the '80s, sir. I'm not exactly sure what year, but I've been living here  
25 twenty-some-odd years.

1 Q Okay. The neighbor –

2 A [INAUDIBLE].

3 Q The neighbor where you witnessed the sewer backup, what was that neighbor's  
4 address?

5 A I have – Mr. Fowler, who is here today, and I also have a neighbor that is not  
6 here, and his has been backed up two or three times.

7 Q I'm talking about the specific incident you said you witnessed personally where  
8 there was a sewer backup, and I think you described it as being a mess.

9 A Right, yeah. That'd be Mr. Fowler. He's on my – if you're looking at my house,  
10 Mr. Fowler is —

11 FROM THE AUDIENCE: On your left.

12 A [Ms. Gosnell] Yeah, on the left, okay. The other neighbor is on my right. I can't  
13 remember his last name. There are two families that are living there, sir. Not  
14 two families; a young woman with three children and her father are living there  
15 and that's why I'm getting [INAUDIBLE].

16 Q So, you think it would've been 215 River Forest Drive? Is he on one side of  
17 your house or the other?

18 [Short Pause]

19 FROM THE AUDIENCE: On your left.

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Ms. Gosnell, you have to  
21 speak into the microphone for us.

22 A [Ms. Gosnell] I'm so sorry, excuse me, please.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: You have to give us your  
24 attention.

25 A [Ms. Gosnell] I'm sorry. I'm trying to figure out where I am on the street.

1 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: We understand. Thank  
2 you, ma'am.

3 Any other questions?

4 MR. HOEFER: I just have one more question.

5 Q [Mr. Hoefer] Can you tell me when you complained to the company regarding  
6 any of the matters you spoke about?

7 A I cannot tell you an exact dates. When I first moved in, of course, I talked to  
8 them quite a bit, and as time goes on, the last meeting, I was not able to be  
9 here because my husband had cancer. He was in bed, and I was taking care  
10 of him 24/7. And unfortunately, I missed that meeting, but there was nothing I  
11 could do about missing that meeting, sir.

12 MR. HOEFER: No more questions, Mr. Chairman.

13 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you ma'am, very  
14 much.

15 A [Ms. Gosnell] You're welcome.

16 MR. BUTLER: I'd like to call Margaret Wilson,  
17 please.

18 **WHEREUPON, Margaret Wilson** first being duly  
19 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

20 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and  
21 address for the record, please?

22 **TESTIMONY BY MARGARET WILSON:**

23 A I'm Margaret Wilson. I live at 108 Forestview Drive, which is in the same sub-  
24 division as Ms. Gosnell, and I'm here in concern because of the prospective  
25 rate increase of United Utilities.

1 We bought our home less than five years ago in March and at that time  
2 when we signed at closing, there was no disclosure of a separate utilities company.  
3 We were in the house about two months, and I had a serviceman knock at my  
4 door and inform me that they would begin sending us a statement for our sewage  
5 bill, otherwise I [INAUDIBLE]. so I did pay them.

6 When they asked for a rate increase of 65% a couple of years ago, we  
7 did contact United Utilities. I did talk to them. They were very rude and not  
8 wanting to address the situation with me at all. Their statement to me was that  
9 they had not had a rate increase in the last ten years and that they thought it  
10 was very fair for them to ask for the rate increase. At that time, we were paying  
11 approximately \$25 a month for sewage. They did get the approval of the 65%,  
12 and our rates increased from \$25 to \$45 a month for sewage at this time, and  
13 the other 35% that they're requesting, I think that'd probably put me over \$50  
14 a month.

15 [Cellphone Ringing]

16 My daughter that lives over near Spartanburg, and she pays approximately  
17 \$40 a month for her sewage. I think it comes out to about [INAUDIBLE] a month  
18 on her monthly bill. I would like to see somewhere comparable to that. I do  
19 think it's unfair for a utility company to have a complete monopoly on us, and  
20 I'm going to investigate the procedure for deregulating the area so that we  
21 might be able to have a septic tank ourselves, and not have to be straddled with  
22 that bill. I do express my desire to you to not let them use that 35% as a rate  
23 increase [INAUDIBLE]. I certainly support the man who said that we need to put  
24 our citizens of South Carolina before we do in [INAUDIBLE].

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Does any Commissioner

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 have any questions?

2 [No Response]

3 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you ma'am, very  
4 much.

5 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chairman, that does complete  
6 the list of public witnesses.

7 MR. FOWLER: One more – I had a question mark.

8 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Okay, you've got to come  
9 to the front, please sir.

10 **WHEREUPON, Jimmy Fowler,** first being duly sworn,  
11 assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

12 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
13 for the record, please?

14 **TESTIMONY BY JIMMY FOWLER:**

15 A Jimmy Fowler, 215 River Forest Drive. And I think I have a solution for United  
16 Utilities. I have from good sources that the local sewer company is willing to  
17 sit down and discuss a price for that sewer system, if they are willing to sell.  
18 So, all he's got to do — if they're headed for harder times, sell the thing. I've  
19 got a buyer.

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Excuse me, sir. Do we  
21 have any other questions?

22 [No Response]

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Hoefer?

24 MR. HOEFER: No questions, Mr. Chairman.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you sir, very much.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

MR. FOWLER: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have anyone else that had not signed up and has something that they would like to add to this hearing?

*[No Response]*

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: I'm going to ask our attorney to give you some information concerning North Greenville; we want to make sure that everyone's aware of it.

MR. BUTLER: Yes, I just wanted to remind the folks in North Greenville that your Petition to Intervene is still pending. There is a Motion to deny your intervention. That has not been ruled upon yet, and I just wanted to make sure that our discussion tonight did not give you the impression that that Motion had been ruled on, because it has not been formally ruled on at this time.

MR. McCALL: I think that Motion is to limit our intervention or to limit the extent of the intervention. I don't believe it's a Motion to dismiss the Petition to Intervene *per se*, and I think it's [INAUDIBLE].

MR. BUTLER: All right, sir. Well, do you still wish to reserve your right to appear in Columbia?

MR. MCCALL: Yes, sir.

MR. BUTLER: All right. Thank you very much.

MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. McCall is

1 correct.

2 MR. BUTLER: Okay. I apologize. I misstated that  
3 Motion, but under these conditions, you're still invited to  
4 Columbia.

5 We might have one more person who said they  
6 wanted to appear tonight, Scott Bagwell. Do you want to  
7 appear Mr. Bagwell?

8 MR. BAGWELL: I guess.

9 MR. BUTLER: Come on forward.

10 **WHEREUPON, Scott Bagwell,** first being duly  
11 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

12 MS. BOYD: State your name and address for the  
13 record, please.

14 **TESTIMONY BY SCOTT BAGWELL:**

15 A Scott Bagwell, 228 River Forest Drive, Spartanburg, South Carolina 29306.

16 I guess I want to say that, about the sewer rate, I think we're paying too  
17 much. I think we're paying way too much, because, I mean, everybody else,  
18 people out there in Inman and stuff like that, they're paying about a third of what  
19 we're paying for their sewer, water, and everything. Actually, they're paying about  
20 half, about \$40 a month for water and sewer and everything.

21 That's the way I feel, I mean, that's what I had to say.

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you sir. Does  
23 anyone have any questions?  
24

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

Q Mr. Bagwell, how long have you live on River Forest Drive?

A Since 1990.

Q In terms of – well, I guess, you know, being that we're just dealing with sewer, have you ever had any issues with the sewer part of your sewer experience since 1990? Have you ever had any negative issues as it relates to the service, sewer service? Have you ever had a back-up in your system?

A I have one time.

Q Was that taken care of fairly, from your perspective?

A They come out and took care of it, yeah.

Q Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you sir, very much.

MR. BAGWELL: You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Is there anyone else?

Yes, ma'am?

FROM THE AUDIENCE: I've already been up there one time, but I wanted to ask if [INAUDIBLE].

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Normally you just get one shot.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: All right.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: All right, is there anyone else that has not had an opportunity?

[No Response]

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If not, we would like to thank each of you that attended tonight, and we assure



1 you those that did testify before the Commission, that  
2 your information is recorded and will be on the record,  
3 and you will be able to see it on the computer. I'm going  
4 to let the attorney give you some information as to how  
5 you can get any information that you need concerning the  
6 docket.

7 MR. BUTLER: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
8 We have a Commission website where you can view all  
9 the information on this case in case you haven't already  
10 found it. Go to [www.psc.sc.gov](http://www.psc.sc.gov), and I'll give that again,  
11 [www.psc.sc.gov](http://www.psc.sc.gov), and again, as I mentioned at the beginning  
12 of the hearing, we're going to have some more public  
13 hearings. In addition to that, we will have an evidentiary  
14 hearing in Columbia on August 28<sup>th</sup>, which is a Monday,  
15 at 10:30, in the offices of the Public Service Commission,  
16 and that is located at 101 Executive Center Drive in Columbia,  
17 South Carolina. A gain, if you go to that website that I just  
18 mentioned, you can find directions to that location on that  
19 website, if you'd like to attend the additional evidentiary  
20 hearing.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Before we close, I'd like  
23 to remind you again, those of you that did have questions  
24 that you desire an answer, we have individuals from ORS  
25 that will be on this side and individuals from the company

1 that will be on this side; and feel free to discuss any issue  
2 that you might have with them.

3 Thank you for attending.

4

5 [*WHEREUPON, at approximately 7:55 P.M., on July 17,*  
6 *2006, the Hearing was adjourned.*]

7

8 MaryJane Cooper, *Certified Court Reporter*  
9 Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
10 101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210  
11 P.O. Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211  
12 ☎ (803) 896-5108  
13 [MaryJane.Cooper@psc.sc.gov](mailto:MaryJane.Cooper@psc.sc.gov)